The Genus *Spilosoma* at Dungeness, Kent

By R. E. Scott

All three species of the genus *Spilosoma* occur quite numerously at Dungeness, Kent, and are readily attracted to light. During the six years 1962-64 and 1966-68 I have operated light traps at two sites on Dungeness. In the first period I ran a Robinson 80 watt m.v. trap at Dungeness Bird Observatory (site A), grid reference 085172; and for the second period a trap based on a standard 200 watt bulb at Boulderwall Farm (site B), grid

Spilosoma lubricipeda L. (White Ermine)

Site	Year	First Record	Last Record	Span of Emergence (days)	Total Trapped	Peak
A	1962	Jun. 11	Jul. 4	24	9	3 on June 11th
A	1963	Jun. 7	Jul. 23	47	13	2 on three dates
A	1964	May 26	Jun. 16	22	28	4 on June 5th
B	1966	Jun. 7	Jun. 28	22	26	5 on June 12th and 15th
B	1967	Jun. 1	Jul. 14	44	32	5 on July 6th
B	1968	May 18	Jul. 6	50	19	6 on June 16th
Average:						
	1962-64	Jun. 4	Jul. 4	31	17	
	1966-68	May 29	Jul. 6	39	26	
	1962-68	Jun. 1	Jul. 5	35	21	June 16th

S. urticae Esp. (Water Ermine)

Site	Year	First Record	Last Record	Span of Emergence (days)	Total Trapped	Peak
A	1962	Jun. 14	Jul. 30	47	7	All singles
A	1963	Jul. 3	Jul. 9	7	2	Singles
A	1964	Jun. 11	Jun. 29	19	6	All singles
B	1966	Jun. 6	Jul. 7	32	26	5 on June 12th
B	1967	Jun. 25	Jul. 16	22	31	9 on July 6th
B	1968	Jun. 17	Jul. 24	38	37	9 on July 8th
Average:						
	1962-64	Jun. 22	Jul. 13	24	5	
	1966-68	Jun. 16	Jul. 15	31	31	June 29th
	1962-68	Jun. 18	Jul. 14	27	18	

S. lutea Hufn. (Buff Ermine)

Site	Year	First Record	Last Record	Span of Emergence (days)	Total Trapped	Peak
A	1962	Jul. 8		1	1	
A	1963	Jun. 6	Jul. 23	48	8	All singles
A	1964	Jun. 5	Jul. 15	41	12	4 on June 10th
B	1966	Jun. 15	Jul. 26	42	46	5 on July 2nd
B	1967	Jun. 21	Jul. 29	39	65	14 on July 11th
B	1968	Jun. 19	Aug. 2	45	65	11 on July 4th
Average:						
	1963-68	Jun. 13	Jul. 25	43	1962-64 7 1966-68 55 1962-68 33	June 29th (1964-68)

refence 063196. These two periods are not therefore strictly comparable, over the course of twelve months the m.v. trap providing a considerably greater variety and number of insects.

Full details of the capture of all three species are shown in the tables.

One of the most interesting facts to emerge from an examination of these tables is that although the two sites are only two miles apart, all three species are obviously much more numerous at site B where a less efficient trap was being operated. The main differences between the vegetation of the two sites is the much drier habitat at site A, site B being very close to water filled ditches with many damp and wet area plants. Of the three species, *lubricipeda* is the most equally abundant at the two sites, well exceeding the other two species at site A.

The following list summarises the points made apparent by an examination of the tables:—

1. All three species are more numerous at site B.
2. *S. lubricipeda* is the commonest at site A, followed by *lutea* and then *urticae.*
3. *S. lutea* is the commonest at site B, followed by *urticae* and then *lubricipeda.*
4. *S. lubricipeda* shows the most similarity between the two sites.
5. It appears possible that *lutea* has an earlier emergence at site A than at site B.
6. *S. lubricipeda* has an earlier emergence than the other two species, being nearly two weeks in advance.
7. On average *lutea* shows the longer emergence period, followed by *lubricipeda.*

It is perhaps worth mentioning that up to the time of my trapping Chalmers-Hunt (1962-68) was only able to record 13 imagoes of *S. urticae* at Dungeness, the first being recorded in 1932 and the dates covering the period 31st May to 28th July.

REFERENCE

Chalmers-Hunt, J. M. (1962-1968). *The Butterflies and Moths of Kent*, Vol. II.

Dungeness Bird Observatory, Romney Marsh, Kent. 8.vii.1969.

The Future for the Amateur Entomologist

By R. M. Payne

We are constantly hearing and reading in the entomological journals of two kinds of reactions to the impact of progress on our hobby. On the one hand there is the plea for conservation of the dwindling areas of certain types of natural habitat in the face of modern demands on land, coupled with the ominous portent of permits to collect insects; and on the other hand there is the protest from those who remember better days that things are not what they were, that the Blues are no longer in such profusion on the Downs, that our favourite wood has been clear-felled and replaced by obnoxious conifers, and that motor-cars are emitting too much poisonous waste.

These are of course two aspects of the same phenomenon, and as amateur naturalists or just plain collectors we cannot help deploring such